

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in dependent claims 20, 30, and 31. In this Amendment, Applicants have rewritten these claims in independent form to include the all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that now-independent claims 20, 30, and 31 are now allowable.

Further in this Amendment, Applicants have amended independent claims 12, 23, and 27 to include the features of previously pending dependent claim 24, now cancelled. As such, amended independent claims 12, 23, and 27 now claim that the leaf spring is a flat metal sheet. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected previously pending dependent claim 24 by arguing that Schilling discloses a leaf spring 32 that is a flat metal sheet and that it would have been obvious to construct the leaf spring of Clouse as a flat metal sheet as taught by Schilling. As will be further discussed below, Applicants respectfully traverse this argument by the Examiner.

First, Applicants respectfully submit that Schilling does not disclose a leaf spring that is a *flat metal sheet*. The leaf spring 32 of Schilling requires C-hooks 38, 40. In the only illustrated embodiment of leaf spring 32, the spring is integrally formed with the aft hook 40 in a one-piece sheet metal construction. As further disclosed in Schilling, arcuate backing strip 28 of seal 24 includes a pair of arcuate mounting rails 34, 36. These rails 34, 36 are configured for slidably mounting the seal to the complementary C-hooks 38, 40. Col. 3, lines 18-60. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Schilling does not disclose a leaf spring that is a flat metal sheet.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully submit that the leaf spring of Clouse has its particular configuration with opposed arms 163, 165 and the arcuate curve (Fig. 7) to provide particular advantages over the shapes for these springs in the prior art. Therefore, Applicants also respectfully submit that it is improper to attempt to modify the configuration of the spring of Clouse to be that of Schilling since this would change the principle of operation of Clouse's spring and render it unsatisfactory for its intended purpose.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 12, 23, and 27 are not obvious over Clouse and Schilling, as argued by the Examiner in the Office Action when rejecting previously pending dependent claim 24.

Further in this Amendment, Applicants have amended Figure 1 in the attached Replacement Sheet to obviate the Examiner's objection with respect to the legend PRIOR ART. Additionally, Applicants have amended claim 13 and cancelled claim 20 to obviate the Examiner's indefiniteness rejections.

Lastly in the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the drawings for not showing the feature where a central abutment section of the leaf spring engages with the inner shroud and lateral abutment sections of the leaf spring engage with the seal bearing. The Examiner is requiring these features to be shown in the drawings. Applicants respectfully traverse this objection by the Examiner.

First, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is a National Phase application of PCT International Application No. PCT/DE2005/000182, and that the drawing requirements for this National Phase application are governed by M.P.E.P. ¶ 1893.03(f), which provides that the drawings for the national stage application must comply with PCT Rule 11. As further stated in this M.P.E.P. section, "[t]he USPTO may not impose requirements beyond those imposed by the Patent Cooperation Treaty (e.g., PCT Rule 11)." Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that the drawings comply with PCT Rule 11, that the Examiner cannot place additional requirements on the drawings beyond those that are imposed by PCT Rule 11, and therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this drawing objection for at least this reason.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that according to 35 U.S.C. 113, a drawing is only required "where necessary for the understanding of the subject matter to be patented" and, also according to 37 C.F.R. 1.81(a), the applicant is only required to furnish a drawing of his or her invention "where necessary for the understanding of the subject matter sought to be patented". Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that drawings are not even required in patent applications, and when drawings are required, they are only required "where

necessary” for the “understanding of the subject matter sought to be patented”. Applicants respectfully submit that this feature is not required to be shown in the drawings since it is not “necessary for the understanding of the subject matter sought to be patented.” In fact, the Examiner has not even argued that these features are not understood by the Examiner.

Applicants respectfully submit that one skilled in the art can understand these features, especially since these features are described at least in the last sentence of para. 0020 of Applicants’ specification and the reverse manner for engaging the central abutment section 36 of the leaf spring with the seal bearing 32 and engaging the lateral abutment sections 37, 38 of the leaf spring with the inner shroud 31 is also described in the specification at this paragraph and is shown in Figure 3. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that these features are not required to be shown in the drawings since showing these features in the drawings is not necessary for an understanding of the subject matter sought to be patented. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner’s drawing objection be withdrawn for at least this additional reason.

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. If there are any questions regarding this Amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

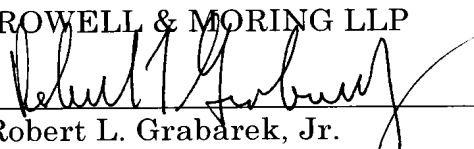
As provided for above, this paper includes a Petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket 011235.58057US).

Respectfully submitted,

CROWELL & MORING LLP

Dated: March 22, 2011

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Attachment
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